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to observe on both sides of the battle line—is the almost utter futility, or, at least, the very great difficulty, of getting a nation to save food, even one commodity of food, before it has attained the sacrificial consciousness of war. We cannot expect a nation to save food if it does not save automobiles, graphophones, hats, shoes and all commodities of life, especially luxuries. It is impossible. One cannot separate out of one's consciousness a particular commodity and give it a priority in saving. A fraction can do it—perhaps 30 per cent of the people can do it;—but a people as a whole cannot do it, and that is the reason why in this country we have, just as they had in England in 1916 and in Germany in 1915, difficulty in the program of food conservation because our people have not yet attained sacrificial consciousness for the carrying on of the war—in which we view every act of our lives and everything we do and everything we wear and everything we eat, and everything we desire, and everything we use, from the standpoint of a new rule, whether it will or will not aid in the carrying on of the war, whether it is or is not a positive military measure. That is the final step of analysis in all systems of food control. When we have reached that plane, as they have reached it in England and France, the whole problem of control becomes simplified, because the motivation is there that makes it possible to carry through a repression applied to foods in general or to any particular food.

ESSENTIALS TO A FOOD PROGRAM FOR NEXT YEAR

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Food has been our greatest contribution to the war, and it is likely to continue so. Heroic France is today actually so short of food that she has been obliged to cut down her consumption of wheat 25 per cent, her consumption of sugar 49 per cent, and her consumption of fats 48 per cent, in spite of all we could do to help. That fact brings home the part the food we alone can supply has been playing and is to play in winning the war. Great Britain, also, is dependent still for 65 per cent of her essential foodstuffs on Canada and the United States.

Food is our greatest contribution to the war, and our greatest

domestic problem as well. From March 1, 1916, to March 1, 1917, the reserve of the six principal grains in the United States was reduced by an amount equal to one pound per day for every man, woman, and child in America. The difference between the amount of grain in our country at the beginning and at the end of that one year was greater than any crop ever raised in the United States, with three exceptions. We are not only faced with the duty which has been laid upon us to supply food to our Allies and to the neutral nations of the world, a duty which we must perform or lose the war, but also with the duty to restore our own reserve of grain to a point where a single bad crop cannot mean famine in the land. The food situation is serious, if anything can be.

The amount of food available can be increased by producing more or by using less. Nine-tenths of our attention in the United States seems to have been given to saving what we had instead of to the vastly more fundamental question of producing more. If we had concentrated on the question of larger production a reasonable fraction of the attention, ingenuity, and effort that has been given to conservation, there would have been far more food for our Allies and our own people, and much of the painful need for saving as well as the anxiety over supply would have disappeared. It would be hard to imagine a more grievous and unnecessary mistake.

It is substantially too late to increase the crop of 1918—that is fixed, except as cultivation and the weather may affect it still. It will be large or small, as may happen, and there is little we can do about it. The indications are that an exceptional spring will give us far more wheat than we had a right to expect from the area planted. But we cannot safely count on a repetition of such good luck. Now is the time, while action can still produce results, to plan for the crop of 1919.

Increase of crop production is mainly a question of dealing with men. To secure a larger crop is a matter of getting the farmers to produce more, and in order to do that we must deal with them as they are, and take measures such as will fit their circumstances, meet with their approval, and therefore produce results.

One of the main difficulties in our food situation has been that the officials in control have not understood the farmer. We have had the city man's point of view in control of the food question, and not the point of view of the man who produces the food. But the

farmer is the man who grows the crop, and to get him to increase his crop you must reach his heart and his mind. But he cannot be reached along the lines that appeal to the banker, or the merchant, or the brick-layer, or the hand in a factory, but only along lines that fit in with the ways of thinking and living of the man who actually walks in the furrow and milks the cow. And that has not been done.

I am not going into the question of the mistakes that have been made. We are at war, and the past is valuable mainly as a warning. The thing to be done now is to provide for the next crop, leaving the story of what has already happened to be written afterward. When that story is told, the facts concerning the relation of our government to the farmers during our first year in the war will make the story of our blunders in aircraft production look small in comparison. If our farmers, in spite of the failure of the government in organization and understanding, in spite of the lack of labor, credit, and supplies, still increase or maintain the crop production of last year, it will be an achievement far beyond all praise, and it will have saved the nation from losing the war.

The farmer is a member of a highly skilled profession. There is no other man who works for as small a wage who is as skilled a worker as the farmer, and there is no other man who requires as large a field of knowledge to be successful with the work he does. In talking recently to a body of farmers, I assumed that it takes about three years to make a skilled farm hand. Immediately a gray-haired man in the audience spoke up and said, "Ten." To make a farmer capable of directing the work of a farm of course takes very much longer. All this is not generally understood in town. I had occasion, the other day, to tell an energetic, robust and intelligent city man that he could not earn his keep on a farm. He was inclined to be hurt, and very much surprised. "Why," said he, "I supposed anybody could work on a farm." Said I, "A farmer wouldn't have you on his place," and it was true.

A farmer is not only a member of a highly specialized profession, —we must remember that he is also a business man in a business which involves taking larger risks than almost any other business. In addition to all the ordinary chances of business, he is subject to the weather to a degree that is otherwise practically unknown. More than that, he has his own way of thinking, and having reached a decision he is slower to change than the city man. Our city people

are inclined to look down on the farmer. They sometimes think of him as being different from them, and therefore inferior. But this is very far from true.

When all is said and done the man who owns the land from which he makes his living is the backbone of the country. Furthermore, with his family he makes up one-third of the population. Even from the point of view of organization he is not to be despised, for our organized farmers are more in number than the whole membership of the American Federation of Labor.

The demands which will be made upon us for food in 1919 and 1920 will be enormous, and they will be made absolutely irrespective of whether the war ends or not. When victory comes we shall have more, and not less, people to feed than before, for the demands of half-starved Germany and Austria will be added. The ending of the war will produce no more food and no more ships. It will not bring the wheat of India or Argentina or Australia a mile nearer to London or Berlin. The demand on us in 1919 will be colossal whether the war ends or not.

What then must be done to reach the farmer, supply his indispensable needs, and make it possible for him to produce in 1919, when he would like to produce what the nation and the world vitally needs that he should produce, but what the bungling of men in high places bids fair to keep him from being able to produce this year?

First, wipe out the distinction which has been held, and most harmfully held, between the production of food and the use of food. Our conservation measures have been directed upon the theory that the production of food was unchangeable, like the tides or the coming of day and night, and that nothing that was done with the food after it was grown could increase or decrease the growing of food. That theory is wholly mistaken. Very much to the contrary, everything that is done to conserve food, to regulate price, to restrict use, to promote saving, has its direct effect on production. Food is a commodity, and the law of supply and demand, when not repealed by monopoly, applies to food as it does to any other commodity. Conservation measures affect demand. Therefore they must influence supply, or production also. The farmer determines what he is going to grow next year, subject to the demands of his rotation, by the success he has had with the things he grew last year. He is in business to make money. Therefore, he will grow most of what pays best, and he cannot do otherwise.

Take the matter of milk, for example. Whatever reduces the consumption of milk tends to result in less milk for those who need it instead of more. The farmer must milk his cow daily. If, because of any "Save the Milk" campaign, the demand for his milk is cut off, in self-defense he must cut off the supply. He cannot produce milk at a loss. He cannot turn a tap, and hold his milk for a later market. So he reduces supply to the level of demand by selling the cow to the butcher. But if the demand increases at a living price, he will keep his cow and raise more. The more consumption of milk is stimulated, the greater will production be, and the more consumption is reduced, the less the supply of this best and cheapest of animal foods for all of us. A "Save the Milk" campaign is a blunder into which only a city mind could fall.

Chickens, potatoes, veal, lamb, and other produce might likewise be cited to show how the conservation of a farm product has an immediate and direct influence on the production of it, and how wise and skillful a hand is needed to deal successfully with the amazingly sensitive and pervasive relation between agricultural production and the conservation of agricultural products.

The first thing to be done in preparing for a crop in 1919 large enough to meet our foreknown needs is then to wipe out the artificial wall which has been created between food production, which has been assigned to the Department of Agriculture, and food conservation, which the Food Administration supervises and controls. If actual consolidation is impracticable, then at least such coöperation should be enforced between them as will effectually prevent the taking of any conservation measure until farm experts have considered and approved it in relation to production.

The second thing is to see that the farmer has the means with which to produce. Of these, the most important is labor. Man power in agriculture has exactly the same value as man power in war. Since neither high school boys, nor failures from the slums, nor casuals from the streets, nor women on vacation can supply the year-long need of the American farmer for skilled labor, since even before the war began farm labor was probably 10 per cent short, since more than a quarter of our National Army is composed of skilled farm workers, and since it is not easy to grow more crops with less men, the labor situation is critical.

Normally, there is about one farm laborer to every two farms

in the United States. We cannot feed our people and our Allies without the farmer's hired man, but farm help is hard to find and hard to hold. As a rule, the farm laborer has small pay, long hours, complicated tools, and, therefore, the necessity for very high skill in handling them. He does a great many different things, and he must do them with skill or not at all. Then he is often quite isolated; he suffers from exposure to heat and cold; he has no holidays and very few pleasures; and he can get better pay and easier hours elsewhere. It must be made worth while for farm hands to work on the farm.

The government must give the farmer reasonable confidence that in 1919 he will have labor, that he will have seed, fertilizer, farm implements, and credit,—all upon terms that will enable him to produce without loss. There is nothing so destructive of business enterprise as the lack of confidence, and the American farmer has not had confidence this year. It was his patriotism, and nothing else, which led him to plant 42,000,000 acres of winter wheat.

The farmer knows as well as any one that the price of \$2.20 a bushel for wheat was not fixed in order to guarantee him a high price. It was fixed in order to guarantee the city consumer against a higher price. The \$2.20 limit was not an effort to keep the price of wheat up, but a successful effort to keep the price of wheat down. Price fixing of that kind does two things—it discourages production, and it increases consumption,—and these are just the two things that, in the face of a scarcity, we cannot afford to have done. I have no doubt that our acreage of winter wheat this year would have been as large as the Department of Agriculture asked for, if it had not been for the knowledge of the farmers that the price they were getting was being held down by artificial restriction when the prices they were paying were rising at pleasure. As it was, the area planted to winter wheat, while very slightly larger than for 1914, was no less than five million acres smaller than the Department of Agriculture indicated as being necessary to meet the needs of this country and of our Allies. That is the essential figure—five million acres less than the Department of Agriculture asked for. Comparisons with normal times are meaningless or misleading now. The true standard of judgment is what we need now to win the war, not what we used to need in peace.

The farmers raised a great crop last year, at the urging of the government. Many of them lost by their patriotic effort because

the marketing facilities were not properly organized. Men who even sent their wives and daughters into the fields found themselves at the end of the season very much out of pocket. The point is not so much that they lost money, but that they cannot lose money and go on farming. The average farmer in this country gets only about \$400 cash a year. He cannot keep on farming if he loses many acres of potatoes, as many and many a farmer did in Pennsylvania and other states, when it costs him \$90 an acre to put those potatoes in.

The farmer sees that nearly every other producer of the things essential for carrying on the war is assured of a profit. He reads that at Hog Island the government is furnishing money, putting up houses, finding labor, and then guaranteeing a definite percentage of return to the men who undertake the work. He reads of the same thing in other war industries. He has heard that the government is going to put billions of dollars into such industries at huge aggregate profits to their promoters. He does not want huge profits himself,—well he knows he will not get them—but he does want reasonable business security, and it is fair and right that he should have it. At present it is denied to him, and to him almost alone.

Finally—and this, I think, is the most essential need in the whole situation—the farmer must be taken into partnership in the handling of the war. So far as I know there has not been a representative of organized farmers in any position of high responsibility in any organization in Washington charged with the conduct of the war. A third of the people of the United States, who have been producing food, the admitted first essential for the successful conduct of the war, have been denied a voice in dealing with the great questions, even the farm questions, which concern the war. It does not amount to representation for a third of the people of this country to occasionally call a few farmers to Washington for a few days, there to tell them what has been done and secure their approval.

The treatment of the organized farmers may well be contrasted with the proper recognition that has been given to organized labor. A special branch of the Council of National Defence was established to represent it, and organized labor has from the beginning been properly recognized and continuously called into consultation. All I ask is that the enormous body of organized farmers, representing the largest single element among our people, supplying a more essential ingredient for the success of the war than any other, should

themselves have that proper consideration, which is admittedly proper in the case of organized workers off the farm, and certainly is no less proper in the case of organized workers on the farm.

The farmer feels deeply that he has been left out. Again and again, through the Federal Board of Farm Organizations, he has offered his services; again and again he has asked for a working partnership in the war; urgently and repeatedly he has called attention to his lack of necessities without which it would be impossible for him to carry out as fully as he would like to do the duty which the war has imposed upon him. Grudging and merely ostensible recognition, and officially inspired reproof have been substantially the only results. Now is the time, well in advance of the crop of 1919, to call the producers of this country into consultation, to see to it that the farmer's point of view is fairly represented in dealing with farm questions, that matters which are within the knowledge and the competence of this highly trained class of men should no longer be dealt with as they have been dealt with hitherto—almost purely from the point of view of men who were ignorant of the farmer's mind, and apparently altogether out of touch with the conditions under which the farmer does his work.

This is my last word. Remember that farmers are just as different from city men as city men are different from seamen, and that in dealing with farmers, as in dealing with any other highly trained and specialized body of men, success depends on the use of methods which they understand. This fact the city mind seems wholly unable to grasp, and it is the city mind which is in charge of this war. The one thing most needful in order to secure for the world in 1919 a crop equal to the need we know is coming, is to make the farmers of the United States cease to feel that they are outsiders in the war, exhorted and preached at by men who do not understand them, and to take them into a really effective and equal working partnership, and to see that they are recognized as partners on that basis in the winning of this war for human liberty.